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10/609,216	06/26/2003	Karl H. Mauritz	42P16326	6486

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EXAMINER

PATEL, HETUL B

ART UNIT PAPER NUMBER

2186

DATE MAILED: 03/14/2006

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

Office Action Summary	Application No. 10/609,216	Applicant(s) MAURITZ ET AL.	
	Examiner Hetul Patel	Art Unit 2186	

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 03 MONTH(S) FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If the period for reply specified above is less than thirty (30) days, a reply within the statutory minimum of thirty (30) days will be considered timely.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) ☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on 21 February 2006.
- 2a) ☒ This action is **FINAL**. 2b) ☐ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 1-30 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) _____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are allowed.
- 6) ☒ Claim(s) 1-30 is/are rejected.
- 7) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are objected to.
- 8) ☐ Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☒ The drawing(s) filed on 21 February 2006 is/are: a) ☒ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.
Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
- 11) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

- 12) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
- a) ☐ All b) ☐ Some c) ☐ None of:
1. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
 2. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
 3. ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

Attachment(s)

- | | |
|--|---|
| 1) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Notice of References Cited (PTO-892) | 4) <input type="checkbox"/> Interview Summary (PTO-413)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date. _____ |
| 2) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948) | 5) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152) |
| 3) <input type="checkbox"/> Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449 or PTO/SB/08)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date _____ | 6) <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____ |

DETAILED ACTION

1. This action is responsive to the communication filed on February 21, 2006. This amendment has been entered and carefully considered. Claims 1-30 are again presented for examination.
2. The corrected drawings pursuant to 37 CFR 1.121(d) have been received. Therefore, the objection to drawing(s) has been withdrawn.
3. Applicant's arguments filed on February 21, 2006 have been fully considered but they are not persuasive.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 112

The following is a quotation of the first paragraph of 35 U.S.C. 112:

The specification shall contain a written description of the invention, and of the manner and process of making and using it, in such full, clear, concise, and exact terms as to enable any person skilled in the art to which it pertains, or with which it is most nearly connected, to make and use the same and shall set forth the best mode contemplated by the inventor of carrying out his invention.

4. Claims 1-30 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 112, first paragraph, as failing to comply with the written description requirement. The claim(s) contains subject matter which was not described in the specification in such a way as to reasonably convey to one skilled in the relevant art that the inventor(s), at the time the application was filed, had possession of the claimed invention. The newly added limitation in independent claims 1, 14 and 27, "the resistive bus splitter having a specific resistance for each memory module" is not properly described or supported by the application as filed. Although paragraphs [0024] and [0025] of the specification discloses having a specific

impedance for each memory module, that is not necessarily same having same resistance for each memory module as claimed because impedance is not only depends on resistance but also on frequency. So unless the frequency is constant, resistance is not same as impedance. Claims 2-13, 15-26 and 28-30 are also rejected based on the same rationale as they depend upon the rejected base claims.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 102

The following is a quotation of the appropriate paragraphs of 35 U.S.C. 102 that form the basis for the rejections under this section made in this Office action:

A person shall be entitled to a patent unless –

(e) the invention was described in (1) an application for patent, published under section 122(b), by another filed in the United States before the invention by the applicant for patent or (2) a patent granted on an application for patent by another filed in the United States before the invention by the applicant for patent, except that an international application filed under the treaty defined in section 351(a) shall have the effects for purposes of this subsection of an application filed in the United States only if the international application designated the United States and was published under Article 21(2) of such treaty in the English language.

5. Claims 1, 4, 7-8, 14, 17 and 19-21 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(e) as being anticipated by Morris (USPN: 6,862,185).

As per claim 1, Morris teaches a circuit (i.e. 200 in Fig. 2) comprising: a plurality of memory modules (i.e. 201 in Fig. 2); a memory controller (i.e. 207 in Fig. 2) coupled to the plurality of memory modules; a resistive bus splitter coupled between the plurality of memory modules and the memory controller to split signals communicated between the plurality of memory modules and the memory controller (i.e. embedded in the memory board 203 to split the signals sent from high speed connectors 205 and 209 into plurality of connectors 202 coupled to the memory modules 201 in Fig. 2); and a

plurality of terminators (i.e. 204, 210 in Fig. 2) to reduce signal reflections corresponding to the split signals (e.g. see Col. 4, 14-17 and Fig. 2).

As per claim 4, Morris teaches the claimed invention as described above and furthermore, Morris teaches that the memory modules (i.e. 201 in Fig. 2) are dual in-line memory modules (DIMMs) (e.g. see Col. 3, lines 46-47 and Fig. 2).

As per claim 7, Morris teaches the claimed invention as described above. The further limitation of selecting miniature integrated resistor packs as the resistive bus splitter is inherently taught by Morris. The miniature integrated resistor packs has to be present in the memory board (i.e. 203 in Fig. 3A) in order to reduce the noise in the signals sent to DIMMs.

As per claim 8, Morris teaches the claimed invention as described above and furthermore, Morris teaches a plurality of memory expander chips (MXCs) (i.e. 201-1 and 201-2 in Fig. 3) coupled between the resistive bus splitter (i.e. embedded in 203 in Fig. 2) and the plurality of memory modules (i.e. 201 in Fig. 2) (e.g. see Fig. 2).

As per claims 14, 17 and 20-21, see arguments with respect to the rejection of claims 1, 4 and 7-8, respectively. Claims 14, 17 and 20-21 are also rejected based on the same rationale as the rejection of claims 1, 4 and 7-8, respectively.

As per claim 19, Morris teaches the claimed invention as described above and furthermore, Morris teaches that the resistive bus splitter includes a miniature resistive splitter on a PCB (i.e. a plurality of resistors in order to reduce the noise in the signals sent to DIMMs are *inherently embedded* on the memory board 203 in Fig. 2) (e.g. see Fig. 2).

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103

The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

6. Claims 2-3 and 15-16 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Morris.

As per claims 2 and 3, Morris teaches the claimed invention as described above and furthermore, Morris teaches that the plurality of terminators (i.e. 204, 210 in Fig. 2) are attached/mounted on the memory board 203 in Fig. 2. Official notice is taken of the prior art teaching a plurality of components (i.e. terminators) on a single chip. First of all, it has been held that to make integral is not generally given patentable weight. Note *In re Larson* 144 USPQ 347 (CCPA 1965). Furthermore *In re Tomoyuki Kohno* 157 USPQ 275 (CCPA 1968) states that to integrate electrical components onto a unitary, one piece structure would be obvious. Integrating/embedding multiple components on a single chip reduces cabling problems, reduces latency required for communicating among processors, improves efficiency of message passing, reduces chip-to-chip communications costs, allows for less pin count, area saving and high speed data transfer between the elements and leads to further power efficiency and increased scalability. Because multiple terminators embedded on the memory module/memory controller provides improvements in efficiency, cost and scalability over terminators mounted on a circuit board(s), it would have been obvious to use a single chip design in

the device of Morris. Therefore, the claimed invention would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time of the invention.

As per claims 15-16, see arguments with respect to the rejection of claims 2 and 3, respectively. Claims 15-16 are also rejected based on the same rationale as the rejection of claims 2 and 3, respectively.

7. Claims 8-13 and 21-26 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Morris in view of Talbot et al. (USPN: 2005/0166006) hereinafter, Talbot.

As per claim 8, Morris teaches the claimed invention as described above and furthermore, Morris teaches a plurality of memory expander chips (MXCs) (i.e. 201-1 and 201-2 in Fig. 3) coupled between the memory controller (i.e. 207 in Figs. 2-3) and the plurality of memory modules. Suppose even if Morris does not specifically define 201-1 and 201-2 in Fig. 3 as a plurality of memory expander *chips* (MXCs) as claimed, Talbot, on the other hand, teaches a plurality of memory expander chips (MXCs) (i.e. the memory control hubs 160A-160B in Fig. 1) coupled between the memory controller (i.e. 106 in Fig. 1) and the plurality of memory modules (i.e. 171A-171N in Fig. 1).

Accordingly, it would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time of the current invention was made to include a plurality of memory expander chips taught by Talbot in the circuit taught by Morris. In doing so, a large number of memory modules can be connected to the circuit. Therefore, it is being advantageous.

Furthermore, in doing so, address signals are sent through a plurality of MXCs between the resistive bus splitter and the plurality of memory modules.

As per claim 9, the combination of Morris and Talbot teaches the claimed invention as described above and furthermore, Talbot teaches that the plurality of MXCs (i.e. 160A-160B in Fig. 1) enable access to relative larger memory arrays (i.e. 171A-171N and 181A-181N in Fig. 1).

As per claim 10, the combination of Morris and Talbot teaches the claimed invention as described above and furthermore, Talbot teaches that each of the plurality of MXCs (i.e. 160A-160B in Fig. 1) include a built in bi-directional cache (i.e. the cache 175A, 175B in Fig. 1) to decrease latency and increase throughput efficiency (e.g. see Fig. 1).

As per claim 11, the combination of Morris and Talbot teaches the claimed invention as described above. The further limitation, of having a data rate between the memory controller and the plurality of MXCs runs at a relatively higher bandwidth than that of directly supported DIMMs, is also *inherently* taught by Talbot because by coupling a MXC (i.e. 201-1 in Fig. 3) between a plurality (i.e. two) of memory modules/DIMMs (i.e. 201 in Fig. 2), the bandwidth gets doubled compared to if a DIMM is directly connected to the controller (i.e. 207 in Figs. 2-3) (e.g. see Figs. 2-3).

As per claim 12, the combination of Morris and Talbot teaches the claimed invention as described above and furthermore, Talbot teaches about having access coalescing functionality (i.e. access uniting) in each of the plurality of MXCs (i.e. 160A

and 160B in Fig. 1). For example, accesses from a plurality of memory chips (i.e. 171A-171N in Fig. 1) are coalesced/gathered by the hub 160 A (e.g. see Fig. 1).

As per claim 13, the combination of Morris and Talbot teaches the claimed invention as described above and furthermore, Talbot teaches that a portion of the plurality of MXCs (i.e. 160A-160B in Fig. 1) are coupled to each other in series (e.g. see Fig. 1).

As per claims 21-26, see arguments with respect to the rejection of claims 8-13, respectively. Claims 21-26 are also rejected based on the same rationale as the rejection of claims 8-13, respectively.

8. Claims 5-6 and 18 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Morris in view of Jeddelloh et al. (USPN: 2004/0044933) hereinafter, Jeddelloh.

As per claim 5, Morris teaches the claimed invention as described above, but Morris failed to teach that the circuit further including a reference voltage generator to generate a reference voltage corresponding to a memory chip voltage. Jeddelloh discloses a reference voltage generator (i.e. the combination of 74 and 76 in Fig. 2), which generates a reference voltage (i.e. V_{Ref}) corresponding to a memory chip voltage (e.g. see paragraph [0025] and Fig. 2). Accordingly, it would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time of the current invention was made to implement the reference voltage generator taught by Jeddelloh in Morris's circuit. In doing so, the memory modules 60a, 60b may use the reference voltage V_{ref} to determine data bit values during data sensing, writing and reading operations.

As per claim 6, the combination of Morris and Jeddelloh teaches the claimed invention as described above and furthermore, Jeddelloh teaches that the reference voltage (i.e. V_{Ref}) is provided to the plurality of memory modules (i.e. 60a and 60b in Fig. 2) and the memory controller (i.e. 100 in Fig. 2) (e.g. see paragraph [0025] and Fig. 2).

As per claims 18, see arguments with respect to the rejection of claims 5 and 6. Claim 18 is also rejected based on the same rationale as the rejection of claims 5 and 6.

9. Claims 27-29 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Freker (USPN: 6,442,645) in view of Morris.

As per claim 27, Freker teaches a computer system (i.e. 100 in Fig. 1) comprising: a central processing unit (CPU) (i.e. the processor 105 in Fig. 1); a display device (i.e. 125 in Fig. 1) coupled to the CPU to display an image; a plurality of memory modules (i.e. the memory array 120 in Figs. 1-2); a memory controller (i.e. 116 in Fig. 2) coupled to the plurality of memory modules (i.e. 210₁₋₄ in Fig. 2) and the CPU (e.g. see Figs. 1-2). However, Freker does not clearly disclose a plurality of bus splitters and a plurality of terminators. Morris, on the other hand, teaches a plurality of bus splitters coupled between the plurality of memory modules and the memory controller to split signals communicated between the plurality of memory modules and the memory controller (i.e. embedded in the memory board 203 to split the signals sent from high speed connectors 205 and 209 into plurality of connectors 202 coupled to the memory modules 201 in Fig. 2); and a plurality of terminators (i.e. 204, 210 in Fig. 2) to reduce signal reflections corresponding to the split signals (e.g. see Col. 4, 14-17 and Fig. 2).

Accordingly, it would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time of the current invention was made to implement a plurality of bus splitters and a plurality of terminators of Morris in the computer system taught by Freker. By implementing bus splitters, the signals from the memory controller can be split and then sent to a plurality of memory modules at the same time and by implementing terminators, signal reflections can be reduced or totally avoided. Therefore, it is being advantageous.

As per claim 28, the combination of Freker and Morris teaches the claimed invention as described above. The further limitation of selecting miniature integrated resistor packs as the resistive bus splitter is inherently taught by Morris. The miniature integrated resistor packs has to be present in the memory board (i.e. 203 in Fig. 3A) in order to reduce the noise in the signals sent to DIMMs.

As per claim 29, the combination of Freker and Morris teaches the claimed invention as described above and furthermore, Morris teaches that the system further including a plurality of memory expander chips (i.e. 201-1 and 201-2 in Fig. 3) coupled between the resistive bus splitter (i.e. embedded in the memory board 203 to split the signals sent from high speed connectors 205 and 209 into plurality of connectors 202 coupled to the memory modules 201 in Fig. 2) and the plurality of memory modules (i.e. 201 in Fig. 2) to perform memory functions independent of the memory controller (i.e. 207 in Fig. 2) (e.g. see Figs. 2-3).

10. Claim 30 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Freker (USPN: 6,442,645) in view of Morris, further in view of Nizar et al. (USPN: 6,889,284) hereinafter, Nizar.

As per claim 30, the combination of Freker and Morris teaches the claimed invention as described above. However, none of them teaches that the MXC functions include at least one of refresh, dynamic address space re-mapping and memory POST. Nizar, however, teaches that the MXC (i.e. the memory translator hub 100 in Fig. 1) functions include refresh operation (e.g. see claim 9 and Fig. 1). Accordingly, it would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time of the current invention was made to modify the computer system taught by the combination of Freker and Morris as taught by Nizar so the MXC can perform the refresh operation on memory modules. In doing so, the main controller (i.e. the processor 130 in Fig. 1) can be relieved from the burden of refreshing all the memory modules connected to it. Therefore, the overall performance of the computer system improves.

Remarks

11. As to the remark, Applicant asserted that with respect to claims 1, 14 and 27, the splitter not only splits the signals communicated between the memory modules and the memory controller, it also has a specific resistance for each memory module. Morris simply has no information at all about how any buses connect any of the components together.

Examiner respectfully traverses Applicant's remark for the following reasons:

Examiner would like to point out to Applicant that since the newly added limitation in independent claims 1, 14 and 27, "the resistive bus splitter having a specific resistance for each memory module" is not properly described or supported by the application as filed, these claims are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 112, first paragraph, as failing to comply with the written description requirement.

Conclusion

12. The prior art made of record and not relied upon is considered pertinent to applicant's disclosure.

Applicant's amendment necessitated the new ground(s) of rejection presented in this Office action. Accordingly, **THIS ACTION IS MADE FINAL**. See MPEP § 706.07(a). Applicant is reminded of the extension of time policy as set forth in 37 CFR 1.136(a).


A shortened statutory period for reply to this final action is set to expire THREE MONTHS from the mailing date of this action. In the event a first reply is filed within TWO MONTHS of the mailing date of this final action and the advisory action is not mailed until after the end of the THREE-MONTH shortened statutory period, then the shortened statutory period will expire on the date the advisory action is mailed, and any extension fee pursuant to 37 CFR 1.136(a) will be calculated from the mailing date of the advisory action. In no event, however, will the statutory period for reply expire later than SIX MONTHS from the date of this final action.

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Hetul Patel whose telephone number is 571-272-4184. The examiner can normally be reached on M-F 8-4:30.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Matt Kim can be reached on 571-272-4182. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 703-872-9306.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free).

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